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Horace Mann and
M. Hale Smith

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HORACE MANN AND M. HALE SMITH.

At the close of a pamphlet of fifty-six pages, entitled "Sequel," &c., Mr. Mann, with great official importance, took leave of the undersigned. He had learned so much of my character and standing, as to render it useless to notice me farther. The friends of the Secretary shouted that "Mr. Smith was used up." "Great is the Secretary of the Board of Education!" went up from all the craft. From Mr. Smith's fate, let all take warning how they touch the "indefatigable," "the resistless Secretary."

But not having done quite so much as was anticipated, Mr. Mann has made another addition to the "yellow-covered" literature of the day, in a letter of twenty-two pages, to "Rev. Matthew Hale Smith."

The pamphlet is a curiosity, in its way. The author wishes to show that he is a very good man, by attempting to prove that I am a very bad man. By the attempt to lower my character, he hopes to raise his own. He proves that he is a believer in the canonical Scriptures, in the discipline of the Bible, in something more and better than Deism, by proving, conclusively, that I once professed to believe in ultra-Universalism, but am now a Calvinist. It is amusing to hear the friends of the Secretary talk of him as a "*tremendous writer*." So is a Billingsgate woman, with a basket of fish upon her head, a "*tremendous talker*." The elements of power are the same in each. A collision is to be dreaded in either case, for

similar reasons. If any one is in doubt, let him read this letter of Mr. Mann.

I shall notice but two things in the pamphlet. The one personal to myself—the other relating to the Normal School at West Newton.

PERSONAL TO MYSELF.

On page 12, I find the following :

MR. SMITH'S "BOWLING" : — *First preached against ; then committed ; then confessed to his Church ; then denied to the world.*

That I preached against bowling, and then practiced it, is a falsehood. That I ever confessed to my Church what I denied to the world, is another falsehood. In his Sequel, Mr. Mann insinuated that I was in the habit of "bowling Sunday mornings and evenings." He intended to make such an impression ; he did make it. Now, he pretends to have had no such intentions. He presents two other falsehoods, more infamous than the first.

In the early part of August, 1843, I was at the famous watering-place at Hampton Beach. At the invitation of some townsmen, I went out and rolled at ten-pins, for exercise, a short time. At that time, I had not given the question a consideration, whether such an exercise, under such circumstances, purely for purposes of health, was, or was not, proper. I knew it was no unusual thing for gentlemen of my profession to take such exercise. In the Winter following, I found it necessary to rebuke certain professors of religion, who were "lovers of pleasure, more than of God." On the 23d day of December, *almost five months after my visit to Hampton, I*

preached from 2 Cor. vi: 17, 18. Lest the force of my appeal should be lost, I resolved to reprove myself for having once been caught in the devil's society, since I "put off the old man and his deeds." And this I did by saying, "A ball-room is no place for a Christian; a bowling-saloon is no place for a minister of the gospel." Such is the simple story, and all the story. The Secretary has given to the public two different versions of this matter. Let him try again.

Small matter, I think
 "I have been told" that Mr. Mann was bred to the law, though by it he was scarcely able to get his own bread. In the few cases committed to his care, he learned to estimate the advantage of diverting attention from the real issue. Suppose all he had asserted were true, would it vindicate him? Would it prove that he is not a dangerous, designing man? Whether this allusion to myself will pay the Secretary for the expense and trouble of sending to Nashua to get the information he has published, he must decide.

THE NORMAL SCHOOL.

In allusion to my visit to the State School at West Newton, I said, in page 6 of my "Reply":

"But 'to spy out the land' I went, if Mr. Mann is to be believed. Then I was singularly unfortunate in the time I selected. I should have gone 'incog.,' to a recent exhibition of that pattern State school — I should have looked upon some of those ladies, candidates for emolument and fame, as pupils of the Normal School, taking lessons in propriety and delicacy, by wearing the garb of young men; I should have beheld the lady assistant of that school, deepen-

ing those impressions of delicacy, by appearing before the school with arms, feet, &c., apparently bare, though daubed with paint. I say apparently, for the covering worn, if any, looked so like the skin, that the deception was perfect to the eye. I should then, as did the men of old, have spied out the 'nakedness of the land.'"

In the Boston Courier, of March 25, Mr. Cyrus Pierce, the Principal, charges me with "hyperbole and gross misrepresentation." Under the wing of the Secretary, in this letter, Mr. Pierce waxes warmer and warmer. He pronounces the above the "blackest of his [my] calumnies — *the most devilish of them all.*" (The Principal of the pattern school should not swear!) If I have misrepresented, why does not Mr. Pierce give me the true version? For the simple reason that he dare not do so; for in so doing, he would falsify his own correction. If I have misrepresented, then let unmeasured censure fall upon my head. "Mark now," Mr. Pierce, "how a plain tale shall put you down."

At the close of the Fall Term of the Normal School, at West Newton, a Tableau was got up among some of the scholars, and Miss Lincoln and Mrs. Pierce. The exhibition was held in the Normal school-house; all the school attended, except a few persons. Nine gentlemen were present; among whom the bar-keeper of the tavern and the Principal of the school were conspicuous. Five scenes were enacted. No. 1 — "BEFORE MARRIAGE." A young lady of the senior class, dressed in a *complete suit of gentleman's apparel*, represented the lover. No. 2 — "MARRIAGE." The depot-master, in gown and bands, represented the priest; a young lady, in *full costume of a man*, represented the bridegroom.

No. 3 — “AFTER MARRIAGE.” The female gentleman at home, with his “heels as high as the chair, or higher.” No. 4 — LITTLE PIECE OF POPERY ; nuns taking the veil. No. 5 — POCAHONTAS. A young lady, *dressed as a man*, in a reclining position, represented Captain Smith ; the lady Principal, with shoulders bare, naked arms and neck, but painted, with clothes reaching *just* below the knees, stockings of Indian-skin color, with a *position* more disgusting than the dress itself, represented Powhatan. The whole ended with a dance, in which the young keeper of the bar-room and the young lady who teaches the model-school waltzed, to the mutual satisfaction of each other and of the Principal ; for at the close, Mr. Pierce praised the young ladies for acting their parts so well ! These facts are known to some of the members of the Board of Education. I have documentary evidence before me, while I write. Even Miss Lincoln has admitted the general truth of my original statement. Soon after I published it, she read her journal to the school, and in self-defence said, “She should not hesitate to do the same thing again, under similar circumstances.”

There are one or two things in regard to the Normal school at West Newton which ought to be known. Mr. Mann has once or twice referred to the fact, as he calls it, that three-fourths of the present common school teachers in the State are orthodox. His statistics show that he has closely looked at this matter. A remedy for so great an evil is to be found in Normal schools. The pupils for the last season, at West Newton, have ranged from forty to eighty, making an average of sixty. Of this number but two are known to be orthodox communicants, and only six to be favorable to evangelical sentiments. The originator of this school, contends that nothing

above the lowest form of Deism can be taught in any common school in the State, as the principles of piety. The head of that school, if common fame does not misrepresent him, in theology is a Parkerite. His theory of discipline would cause him to turn a boy out of school rather than use the rod. The looseness of moral principle, attendant upon such sentiments, have been developed at West Newton. At the beginning of last season, the mass of the school did not go to church or keep the Sabbath—some on that sacred season made it a sort of gala day—some washed, and others ironed. At one time it seemed as if the opening of that school in West Newton was the opening of Pandora's box. The condition of things called up certain members of the Board of Education. They gave laws on the subject of keeping the Sabbath. The school debated the matter, and resolved that they would do as they pleased. A compromise was made, and the circular of Mr. Pierce went out, making it obligatory upon the scholars to go to church one *half the day*, on the Sabbath, and the rest of the day do as they pleased. And this is the model State school—supported by funds paid out of the treasury of the Commonwealth. Five hundred Normalites are already abroad. Sixty more are nearly ready. These must have the pre-eminence over others. They will go out under the influence of the Secretary. In five years what will be the condition of the common schools in this ancient Commonwealth?

In an appendix to his letter,—which was added to some of the copies, and *carefully kept out of others*,—Mr. Mann boasts, that the vote recently passed by the Legislature, making an appropriation to the Normal school, is a triumph over “Mr. Smith and his friends.” “Mr. Smith and his friends” say this, that if the people of the State are content to vote

away their money, to sustain dancing in school-houses—exhibitions in which women are stripped to their skin, and the other influences that go out from that school, then let the fact be known. I am obliged to Mr. Mann for the issue he makes before the people. We will meet him on that issue.

In my correspondence, I feel that I have done the State some service. Not so much by what I have written, as what Mr. Mann has been compelled to write. He is much better known to the people of Massachusetts than he was when he asked, "Who is Matthew Hale Smith?" I excuse all the abusive language he has employed in respect to myself, for the benefit the State will derive from knowing Mr. Mann so well. Satan is most to be feared when he puts on the garb of an angel of light, and takes on himself the appearance of a minister of righteousness. A distinguished citizen of Boston, soon after the "Sequel" was published, said to me, "I hope you will keep Mr. Mann writing pamphlets; a few more such as this from his pen will save the State from his pernicious influence."

Mr. Mann has once or twice alluded to the distinguished men with whom he has been officially associated. It is evident that such associates have not improved his manners. It remains to be seen whether he will corrupt theirs. Driven to the wall, the Secretary has sought new allies. He has opened a communication between himself and the Trumpet office. He needs weapons; they want a medium of utterance. The Trumpet office is to furnish matter, and Mr. Mann is to give it to the world. When I left the ranks of the Universalists, in 1840, and gave my reasons for so doing, the sect commenced an assault upon me. They have kept it up till now. But a new page was opened to them in the correspond-

ence of Mr. Mann. The stale stories, the vile insinuations, in the Secretary's letter, bespeak their origin. He can find any quantity of such matter in the files of the Trumpet; and in becoming a retailer of second-hand scandals, which have originated in the Trumpet office, he will find an employment better suited to his cast of mind, better suited to his "accomplished" mode of doing business, than in attempting to decide what the constitution means by "principles of piety." I leave him in the fraternal embrace of his new allies, giving him full permission to print any thing relating to me personally that he pleases, on the condition that he will put his name to what he writes, that the bane and the antidote may then go together.

I am not so much a stranger to Boston as Mr. Mann would represent. My childhood was passed in the town of Boston. I was educated in the common schools of the town and city. The greater part of my life has been passed in Boston or immediate vicinity. I consider Mr. Mann officially a bad man—bad in his theory and unscrupulous in the modes by which it is extended. If he is not checked, and that right early, a lasting blight will settle down upon the fair heritage of New England. There is hope yet. Mr. Mann and his theories and their influence are becoming well known. I leave both to the verdict of a moral and religious people. To them I propose this sentiment—"Horace Mann, as Secretary of the Board of Education—Psalm 109 : 8th verse."

MATTHEW HALE SMITH.

Boston, April 30th, 1847.

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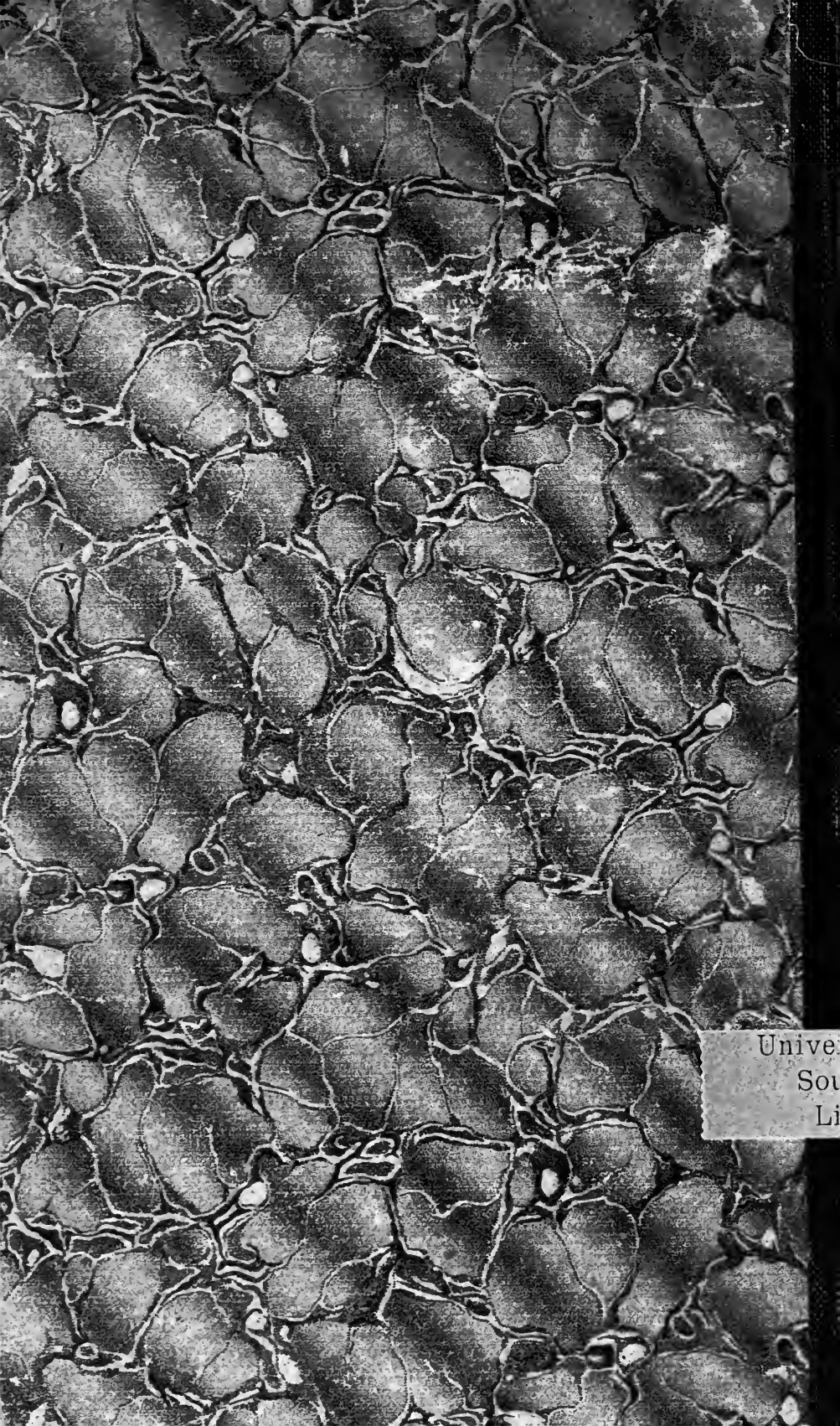
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